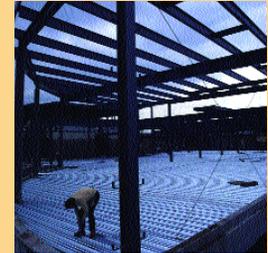
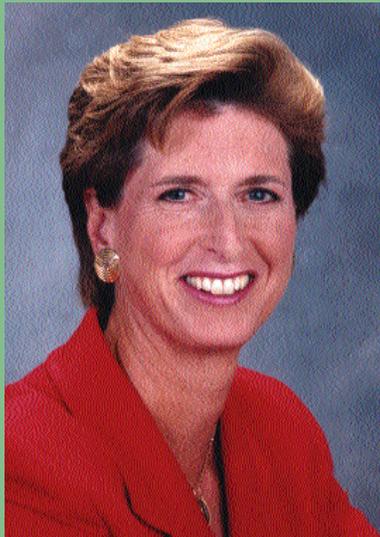


# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A STATE PLAN MAKES!



## A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO THE NEW JERSEY STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

October 1997



**Dear Citizen of New Jersey:**

*Welcome to cross-acceptance! This Citizen's Guide was printed to help you better understand the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan and engage in the process of updating the Plan.*

*The 1997 **Reexamination Report and Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan** represents the State Planning Commission's first update of the New Jersey State Plan since its adoption in 1992. I invite you to participate in the cross-acceptance process to refine the State Plan as well as to shape local and regional plans. Whether you are an elected or appointed official, a business person or a concerned citizen, your opinion matters, and we need to hear from you.*

*As you may know, I support the current State Plan and have directed my cabinet to use the Plan to promote our mutual goals. The Plan is also being applied by many county and local governments in updating master plans and land development policies.*

*Working together, I know that we will produce the best updated State Plan possible, one that promises to improve the quality of life for all of our citizens. What a difference a State Plan makes!*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Christine Todd Whitman  
Governor*

# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A STATE PLAN MAKES!

## A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO THE NEW JERSEY STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

### *To all readers:*

*This guide can help you better understand the adopted New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, as well as the recently released Reexamination Report and proposals for change contained in the Preliminary Plan. You will also find information on the State Planning Act and how citizens can get involved in the State Planning process. The State Planning Commission asks for your comments on the Reexamination Report and the Preliminary Plan. Copies of Communities of Place: The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, as well as the 1997 Reexamination Report and Preliminary Plan are available upon request. A CD-ROM version and other related materials are also available. And, the State Plan can be found on the Internet at: [www.state.nj.us/osp/](http://www.state.nj.us/osp/). We look forward to receiving your comments throughout cross-acceptance.*



# THE STATE PLAN

## Inspires

...with a vision of the State's future which can be shared by all citizens and by all levels of government.

## Leads

...by identifying the paths we must follow and the tools we will need in our journey to this future.

## Balances

...by recommending fair and equitable ways to spread the benefits and costs of growth to meet the special needs and interests of all groups.

## Coordinates

...by providing a single text to which we all can turn for guidance in making growth and development decisions.

### Why A State Plan?

During the last few decades, New Jersey saw many jobs created, and housing built throughout the state. Yet the side effects of this growth were dis-



turbing - housing became unaffordable to many, highway congestion worsened, transit deteriorated, farms and open spaces were lost and cities declined.

In addition, the New Jersey Supreme Court required that a statewide plan be put into place to ensure that affordable housing was available in the right locations without compromising our

environment or economy.



Yet the State, which required municipalities to have master plans, did not have a comprehensive plan of its own to guide its investments, programs or regulations. The

legislature acted to fill this void by adopting the State Planning Act in 1985 (NJSA 52:18A-196 et seq.).

### Why The State Plan Is Important

An independent study that looked at potential impacts by the year 2010 concluded that the State Plan would be good for New Jersey.<sup>1</sup>

*During the cross-acceptance process, the current State Plan will continue to be in force and implemented.*

<sup>1</sup>Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research, 1992

The State Plan helps us save tax dollars. For instance, by using the State Plan:

- ✓ municipalities and school districts can save over \$380 million in annual operating costs, and
- ✓ towns, counties and the State can save \$1.44 billion in the capital costs of schools, roads, sewers and water supply.

It's our tax dollars at stake.

The State Plan helps us save land:

- ✓ 175,000 acres, including
  - 30,000 acres of frail environmental lands, and
  - 44,000 acres of agricultural land.

Land that otherwise would be gobbled up by sprawl development. It doesn't have to be that way.

The State Plan promotes a sound economy:

- ✓ projections for the full amount of growth in jobs and income will be met, and
- ✓ housing will be more affordable, with more choices in type, location and cost.

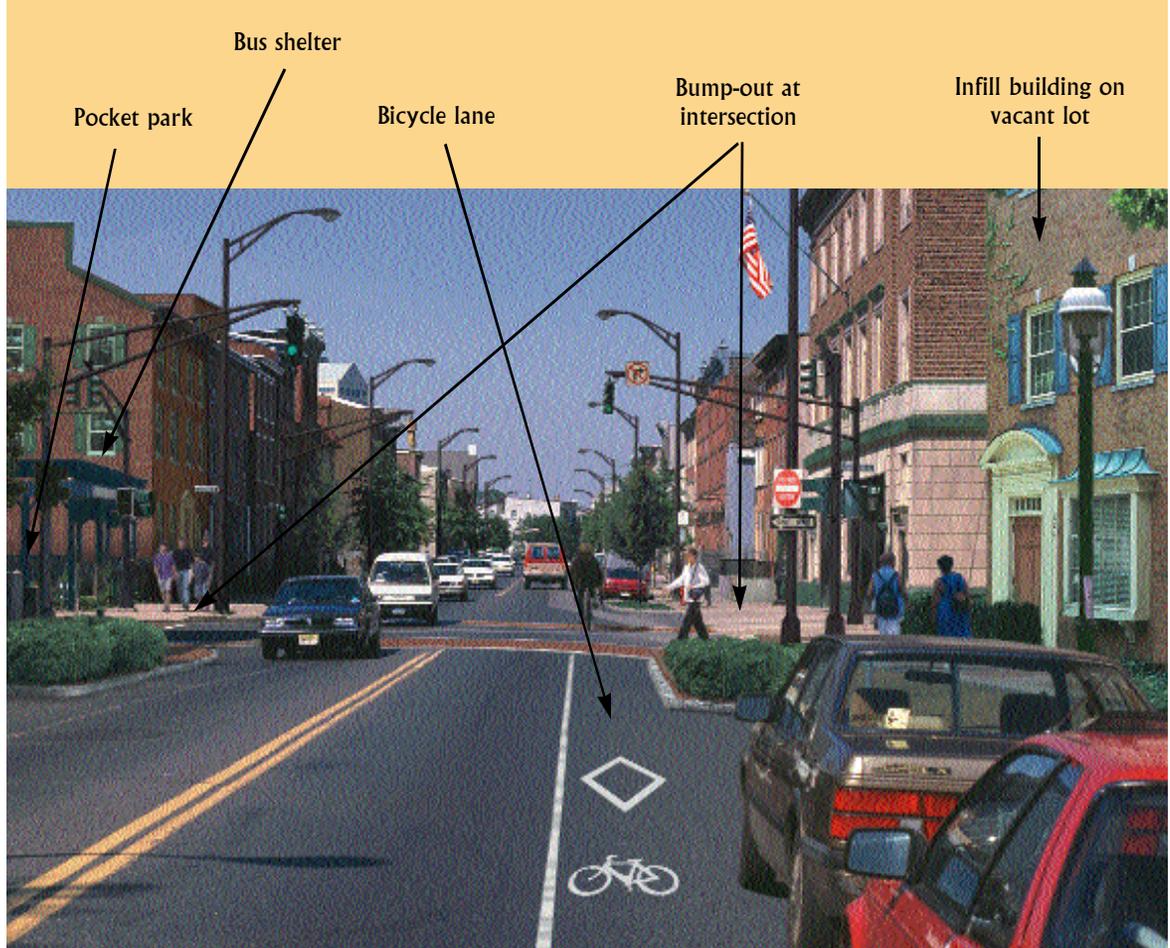
We can have good jobs, a clean environment and decent housing. The State Plan successfully balances these worthy, albeit sometimes competing goals.

In sum, the State Plan is important to all of us. But it is up to us to make it happen.



## Neighborhood Revitalization

The State Plan recognizes that selective improvements to the physical environment of our urban areas can be instrumental in enhancing quality of life and promoting neighborhood revitalization. In this photo-simulation, an urban street (left) is transformed — with the addition of traffic calming devices, a bicycle lane, a bus shelter and other measures — into a more functional and congenial environment for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users (below). The planting of additional street trees and ground level vegetation helps soften the urban environment. Infill housing on vacant lots signifies neighborhood reinvestment.





### What N.J. Can Look Like

Communities of Place is the title of the State Plan because it provides a vision of what New Jersey can be. Dynamic, diverse, efficient and compact communities that provide a wide choice of jobs, housing, shopping and recreation.

Places where we can live, work, shop and play. Places where you can raise your children and share in your grandchildren's lives. Places that we

are proud to call home.

Places that remain in our memory long after we have left. A state where cities are vibrant, and suburbs are affordable and in close proximity. A state where town and country are distinct from the suburban sprawl that has characterized too much of New Jersey over the last few decades. Cities, towns, villages and hamlets surrounded by permanently protected farms, open space or other natural resources.

The New Jersey of the twenty-first cen-

tury is in many ways here today. We just have to see the possibilities and plan for the realities.



### How The State Plan Was Developed

Citizen participation was important to writing and adopting the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. From 1986 through 1992, people from throughout New Jersey attended meetings, sent

letters and answered surveys. Their ideas and suggestions guaranteed that this State Plan is visionary, yet achievable.

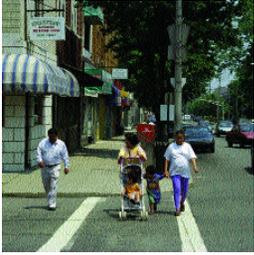
Mayors, freeholders, planning board members, legislators and other public officials participated in the first cross-acceptance process to compare the draft Plan with their plans, and provided comments for consideration.



*“New Jerseyans support planning. They know that without it, we surrender our future to little more than the random will of those who stand to reap short-term benefits at the expense of New Jersey’s long-term well-being.”*

*Governor Christine Todd Whitman*

State and regional agencies also told the Commission how to improve the



Plan. It was the largest effort of its kind in the country.

The Commission also sought out

builders, developers, farmers, property owners, environmentalists, community representatives, corporate and small business leaders, and others in the private sector. Their input was important to a workable plan.

### What The State Plan Says

Quite simply, the State Plan is a *doc* -

*ument* and a *process* that sets out an approach to achieving goals that New Jersey residents share:

- ✓ revitalize our cities and towns,
- ✓ protect our environment and our natural, cultural,



- historic, scenic, open space and recreational resources,
- ✓ ensure adequate housing at a reasonable cost,
- ✓ promote beneficial economic growth, and
- ✓ provide adequate public services and facilities at a reasonable cost.

To achieve these goals requires effective planning for the future.

# Communities of Place are:

## Dynamic

...offering a variety of lifestyles, job opportunities, cultural and recreational activities, and shopping conveniences;

## Diverse

...where new residents can choose among reasonably-priced single family homes, townhouses and apartments - including rental and condominium units;

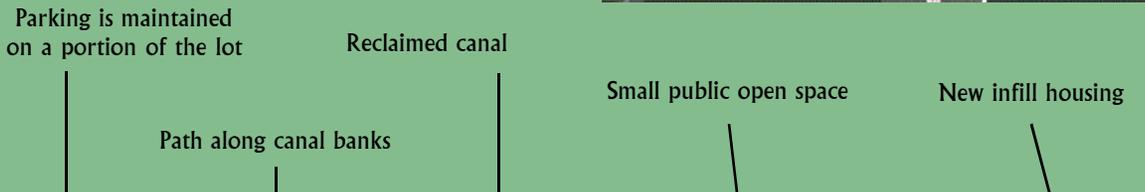
## Compact

...with employment, residential, shopping and recreational opportunities; group or public transportation nearby; and environs or clear edges that define community; and,

## Efficient

...because they are in municipalities and counties that maintain up-to-date master plans and cooperate with other governments in the provision of water, sanitary sewage services, solid waste disposal, public transportation services and other expensive public services.

Natural systems in many urban areas have long been overlooked — streams and canals have been forced into culverts and paved over, wetlands have been filled and floodplains have been developed. The State Plan encourages the reclamation of natural systems — which provide cost-effective mechanisms for improving water quality and managing stormwater runoff — as well as for their amenity value. In this photo-simulation, a section of historic canal flows underneath a parking lot (right). Reclamation of the canal provides recreational opportunities in a dense urban neighborhood and creates an amenity that in turn attracts infill housing and spurs neighborhood reinvestment (below).



The State Plan seeks to achieve these goals in ways that are sustainable - that is, meeting the needs of citizens today without compromising our ability to provide for future generations of New Jerseyans. The Preliminary Plan elaborates on this by promoting a number of key concepts.

These concepts begin with the belief that effective long range planning, actively inventing our future, is an essential to achieving these goals.

This planning must:

- ✓ be based on informed and vigorous public participation;
- ✓ be based on partnerships with the government and

private sector, recognizing that planning issues often go beyond political borders;

- ✓ be fair and equitable in its recommendations to all that are affected;
- ✓ take into account the capacity of our air, land and water, public facilities and the cost of public services;
- ✓ be action oriented with public investment, programs and regulations based on these plans; and
- ✓ account for all the costs of our actions - direct or indirect.

A planning process that incorporates these approaches prevents problems from arising. We know that it's more

effective and less expensive to prevent existing communities (particularly urban centers) from declining, rather than watching them deteriorate and revitalizing them later.

We also know that we should keep our air, water and land pure now, rather than clean them up later; and reduce the need to travel long distances now, rather than build more roads later.

Our efforts - both development and redevelopment - at shaping our cities, towns, villages and neighborhoods must be focused on creating and maintaining diverse, compact, human scale communities, *Communities of Place*.

To prevent sprawl, centers in less developed parts of New Jersey should ensure boundaries between town and country, focus development and redevelopment inside those boundaries, and be surrounded by permanently preserved farmland, open space and other natural resources.

Greenbelts protect centers and greenways connect them to each other.

Nature and natural systems - our rivers, air, natural habitats, ground water, wetlands and stream corridors - should be



protected and managed both within and outside of centers to benefit all New Jersey residents.



### How The State Plan Applies These Ideas

The State Plan promotes the vision of “communities of place” in two ways.

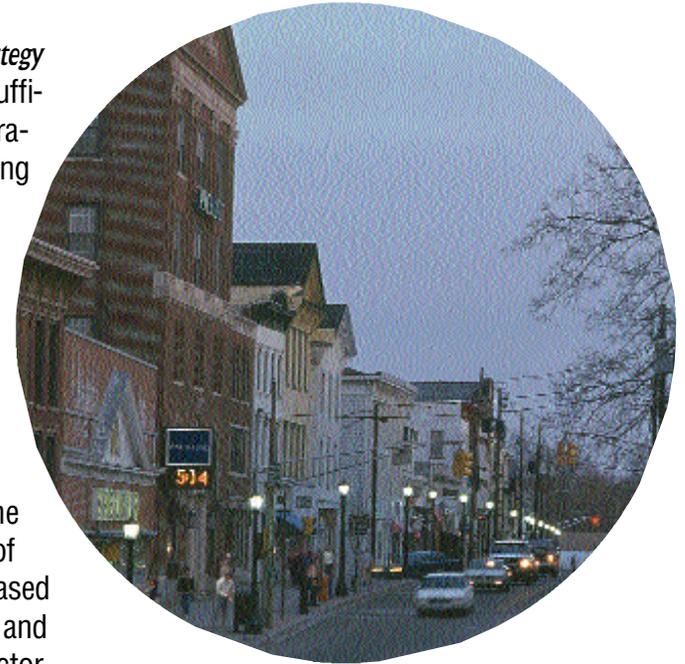
First, there are 8 statewide goals - and strategies to achieve each goal - as well as general policies that apply statewide.

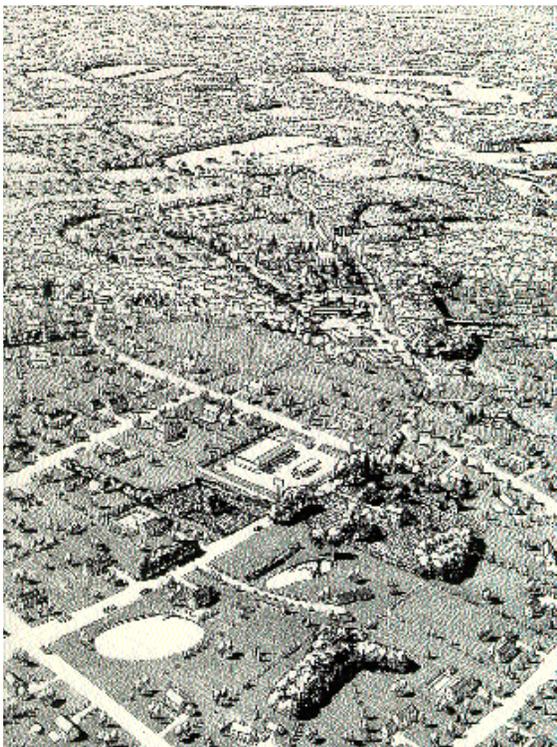
For example, we can meet the *goal* of providing adequate housing at a rea-

sonable cost through a *strategy* that locates sufficient concentrations of housing near jobs, reduces its cost through financial assistance and regulatory streamlining, and encourages the participation of community based organizations and the private sector.

Two hundred and ninety-one policies covering 19 different categories provide more specifics.

Secondly, the State Plan recognizes that solving problems requires different approaches in urban, suburban, rural and environmentally sensitive areas of the State.

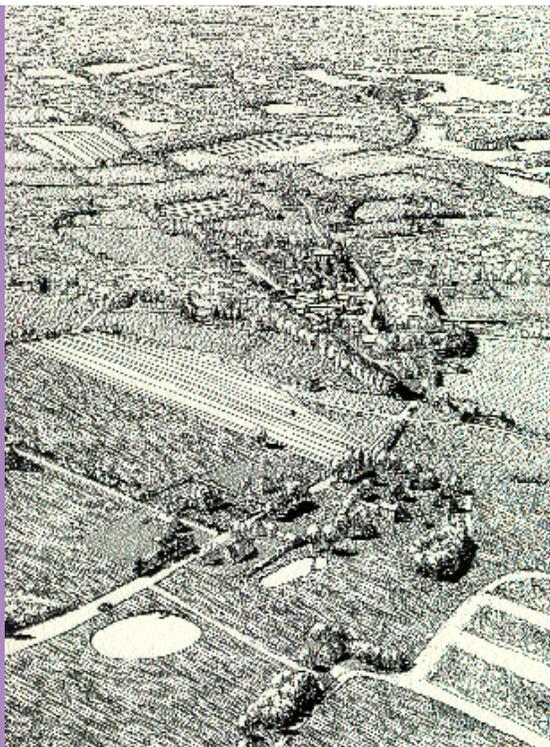




### Trend Development

*Trend Development— in less developed areas, current trends continue to create additional sprawl development. A disjointed pattern of residential subdivisions, disconnected strip malls and low density office parks is costly to service and consumes most open space. More traffic, more pollution, higher housing costs and a lower quality of life will result.*

*Planned Development – Growth consistent with the State Plan is just as robust as under trend conditions, but is concentrated around existing or new centers. Large contiguous areas of farmland or other open space form a greenbelt surrounding these centers. Beneficial economic growth, including appropriately scaled retail shops, offices and a variety of housing choices, can be found within a compact community.*



### Planned Development

These areas (called *planning areas*) have been mapped with widespread public participation. Each plan-



ning area has common natural or man-made characteristics, such as densities, sewer or water lines, farmland, or environmentally sensitive features.

Within these planning areas, development is recom-

mended to be concentrated in compact centers, with healthy neighborhoods or open land surrounding these centers to form a greenbelt.

### How The Plan Is Implemented

The State Planning Act does not require the plan to be used in specific ways by government (except in developing the State's capital budget recommendations and affordable housing allocations).

The Plan works best when State, county and local officials, the private sector and citizens such as yourself work together to achieve our common goals.

During the past 5 years, since the plan was adopted, government leadership and citizen participation have occurred.

With the support of Governor Whitman, state agencies are changing their plans, investments, programs and regulations to more directly support the goals of the State Plan.



In fact, about a dozen state aid programs now give priority consideration to communities that follow the State Plan.

# PLANNING AREAS

## Metropolitan

...Stabilize and revitalize communities, modernize infrastructure, and redesign areas of sprawl

## Suburban

...Promote much of the new statewide growth in centers and redesign areas of sprawl

## Fringe

...Accommodate growth in centers and keep environs largely open

## Rural

...Protect large areas of farmland and accommodate growth in centers

## Environmentally Sensitive

...Protect environmental features, including large areas of open space, and accommodate growth in centers

At the local level, dozens of communities are incorporating policies into their plans and ordinances to make them more consistent with the State Plan.

Builders and developers, corporate leaders and small business people are seeking out land in areas that are consistent with the State Plan for growth, and working with officials on all levels of government in partnership to create places we are proud of.

Housing and commercial space can be built faster and at a lower cost as a result of more predictable decision-making.

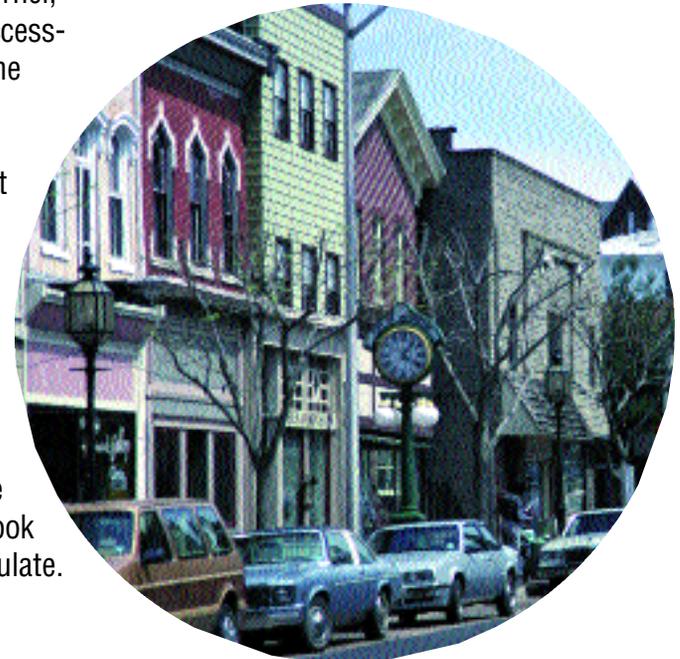
It is good to keep in mind that the State Plan was never intended as a 'quick fix' for the variety of problems currently faced by New Jerseyans. The State Plan is a long-term effort that measures its successes incrementally, step-by-step.

With a good percentage of New Jersey already developed, much needs to be done to revamp or restructure current and past development to fit within the Plan's guidelines for "Communities of Place." Yet a commitment to that long-term effort will benefit us along the way.

The journey toward full implementation of the Plan may not always be an easy one — change takes time and

patience. Like the successful effort in recent years to recycle, though, the results may be just around the corner, and more successful than anyone dared dream.

The end result will be a New Jersey distinguished by prosperity, promise and potential...a New Jersey the rest of the country will look up to and emulate.



# CENTERS

## Urban

...generally the largest centers, offering the most diverse mix of industry, commerce, services, residences and cultural facilities

## Regional

...a compact mix of residential, commercial and public uses, serving a large surrounding area and developed at an intensity that makes public transportation feasible

## Town

...traditional centers of commerce or government throughout the State, with diverse residential neighborhoods served by a mixed-use core offering locally-oriented goods and services

## Village

...primarily mixed-residential places that offer a small core with limited public facilities, consumer services and community activities

## Hamlet

...small-scale compact residential settlements organized around a community focal point, such as a house of worship, luncheonette, small park or a civic building

### How We Measure Our Progress in Achieving State Plan Goals

No plan would be effective without a way to determine its success. Without indicators of progress, there would be no way to gauge whether implementing certain strategies are helping or hindering the achievement of certain goals.

During this round of cross-acceptance, the State Planning Commission proposes that *seventeen key indicators* be monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the State Plan.

These indicators will measure how the Plan:

- ✓ strengthens the economy, producing jobs, reasonably priced

- housing and commercial development;
- ✓ reduces the level of distress among our most impoverished cities and towns;
- ✓ protects the environment and conserves natural resources, including land, water, air, and energy;
- ✓ maintains our public services, increases opportunities for tran-

- sit and reduces congestion;
- ✓ guides development and redevelopment to existing places or to new Centers;
- ✓ redesigns areas of sprawl; and
- ✓ coordinates plans, regulations, investments and programs on all levels of government.

## Suburban Redevelopment



Existing Conditions

Abandoned or underperforming shopping centers offer opportunities to retrofit our suburbs into more humane and efficient environments. Where appropriate, the State Plan encourages the transformation of single-purpose facilities into mixed-use Centers. In this photo-simulation, a vacant retail strip facing a vast parking lot is returned to the tax rolls and transformed into a vibrant, mixed-use environment, initially through the

addition of second- and third-story housing over the original building, with retail and services remaining on the ground floor; and later with the construction of a second mixed-use building front, on part of the former parking lot, creating a traditional street and a lively streetscape. The phased approach is responsive to market realities. Parking is provided along the new street, in the back, or in a deck.

Upper level apartments are added over the original structure

New sidewalks and street trees

Curbside parking is allowed

Retail and services remain on ground floor

Parking lot remains



Stage 1 - Redevelopment of Building

New, traditional streets

New mixed-use buildings built on part of former parking lot



Stage 2 - Redevelopment of Parking Lot



The State Planning process is an opportunity for citizens to see if these are the right measures of progress, to help the State Planning Commission establish targets for some of these indicators, and to begin to think about creating better ways of measuring progress at the local level.

### The Next Step: Cross-Acceptance and The Preliminary Plan

A comprehensive review of the State Plan is conducted periodically, in keeping with the

State Planning Act. Called “cross-acceptance,” this review allows citizens, state and local officials, legislators, planners, businesses, and private and non-profit entities to get involved and offer input.



The New Jersey State Plan was developed to be adaptable to changing circumstances and factors -- it is not written in stone, impervious to the needs and concerns of the citizens it serves.

The State Plan goes through the cross-

acceptance process every three years following the adoption or re-adoption of the Plan, when any interested individual, town, county or state agency can request or recommend changes in the goals, strategies and policies.

These proposed changes, along with the fundamental structure of the State Plan, when taken together comprise the Preliminary Plan. At the end of cross-acceptance, the Commission will adopt a revised State Plan to reflect the changes to the Preliminary Plan.



While this is a time-consuming exercise, it helps ensure that plans will reflect the desires of our citizens and local officials.



Governor Whitman charged the Commission in 1996 as it began the periodic review to refine the Plan in the spirit of the ancient expression, “It is a bad plan that admits of no modifications.”

Moreover, she encouraged the Commission to build upon the foundation of the current Plan and embrace its basic tenets.

# Cross-Acceptance & You

But, this is only the beginning of the process. Public meetings will be held to encourage comments regarding the proposed changes to the current State Plan.

During the two year cross-acceptance process, the Plan will be compared to local and regional plans, regulations and programs.

During this process, the current State Plan will continue to be in force and implemented.

The Commission will work with local representatives to reach agreement on changes to the State Plan or to local plans. Final resolution will occur after public hearings with the adoption of the next State Plan.

This unique process ensures that New Jersey's State Plan accurately reflects your needs and concerns, and those of your neighbors and community leaders.

In preparation for this, the State Planning Commission:

- ✓ held ten Listening to New Jersey Town Meetings from Cape May to Liberty (Warren County),
- ✓ surveyed every municipality and received meaningful input, and
- ✓ provided other opportunities for comment on the adopted plan, as well as various drafts of the Preliminary Plan.



The Commission worked with staff and the public to analyze current trends and look at projections for growth through the year 2020.

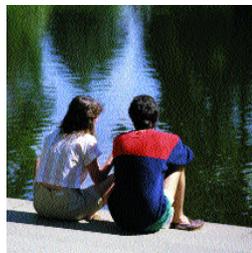
A Reexamination Report was drafted, similar to those done by local planning boards before

adopting a new Master Plan.

The Reexamination Report provided the Commission with information on:

- ✓ the types of changes that have occurred since the State Planning Act became law in 1986 and since
- the State Plan was adopted in 1992,
- ✓ the effects of these changes on the goals and policies of the State Plan, and
- ✓ proposed responses of the State Plan to these changes.

After a year and a half of preparation, the Commission approved the Reexamination Report and Preliminary Plan to begin cross-acceptance.





## Key Proposals in the Preliminary Plan

Among the new proposals outlined in the Preliminary Plan are:

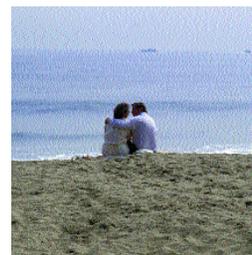
- ✓ a vision of the State in the year 2020,
- ✓ policies to strengthen regional planning and cooperation,
- ✓ key concepts and indicators of progress,
- ✓ policies to improve the design of our communities,
- ✓ policies and guidance on how to protect the environs of centers and promote greenbelts,
- ✓ recommenda-

tions for redesigning areas of sprawl into mixed-use, vibrant areas,

- ✓ incorporation of the concept of 'sustainability' in many policies - that is - ensuring that actions we take today do not adversely harm future generations, and
- ✓ ways to better implement the State Plan.
- ✓ Greater detail is provided regarding the way growth should be promoted in the Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas, as well as accommodated in Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas.

The State Plan Map reflects the actions of the Commission since the adoption of the Plan in 1992:

- ✓ twenty-seven Centers were designated, as well as some planning area changes to better reflect existing conditions.



## How You Can Get Involved

It also takes your participation to make it happen. By periodically drafting, revising and adopting the State Plan through a cross-acceptance

process that is participatory and inclusionary, the State Planning Commission is ensuring that tomorrow's New Jersey is even better than today's.

There are a number of ways you can get involved.

Come to a meeting hosted by the State Planning Commission or the County Planning Board, and find out what state and county plans say about the future.

Participate in organizations that work to shape the State Plan or use the Plan in private sector development decisions.

Contact the Office of State Planning with any questions or comments.

If you're a local official, urge the planning board and governing body to discuss in detail what the State Plan says and how it compares to your local plan.

The process for cross-acceptance is listed on the next page.



The State Planning Commission recognizes that only a collaborative approach that involves all levels of government and the private sector will produce a plan that we can all call our own.

This is not 'top-down' or 'bottom-up'. Rather, it is a partnership that will produce a consensus for future action.

### Who To Contact For More Info

For more information, please contact the Office of State Planning. You may write to 33 West State Street, P.O. Box 204, Trenton, New Jersey, 08625-0204.

Or you may call (609) 292-7156. OSP has a toll-free information line for an up-to-date list of upcoming meetings (1-800-522-0129).

There are a number of documents related to the State Plan that are avail-

able from the Office of State Planning, or may be found at county or municipal planning offices.

*Communities of Place: The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan* (June 1992) is the adopted State Plan. *The Reexamination Report and Preliminary Plan* (1997) is available



in both a working version (with strikeouts and underlines for information deleted or added) and a presentation ver-

sion (without strikeouts and underlines). An Executive Summary is also available.

*The Cross-Acceptance Manual* discusses the process to review and revise the Plan.

Technical documents related to State Plan indicators and design are also available.

And, a CD-ROM that includes these documents and other supporting material may be obtained from the Office.

In addition, for your convenience, the Commission and staff are now on-line.

# The Cross-Acceptance Process

## Comparison Phase

Counties and Municipalities compare their policies and regulations with the Preliminary Plan and identify inconsistencies. Each County will issue a report on their findings and recommendations, six months after the start of cross-acceptance. (September 1997 thru February 1998)

## Negotiation Phase

The State Planning Commission reviews reports and mapping revisions and will negotiate changes to the Preliminary Plan with counties and municipalities at public sessions. An Interim Plan is approved, based on the results of these negotiations. (March 1998 thru July 1998)

## Impact Assessment

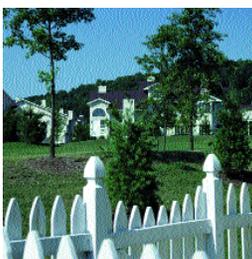
An independent Impact Assessment is conducted on the Interim Plan. (July 1998 thru October 1998)

## Final Review Phase

The Commission conducts at-least six public hearings on the Plan, other related documents. After the last of these hearings, the cross-acceptance process ends. (November 1998 thru April 1999)

## Adoption of the Plan

Following the completion of the Final Review Phase, the Commission will consider revisions to the Interim Plan for adoption as the second State Development and Redevelopment Plan. (April 1999)



“OSPnet” is the home page on the World Wide Web. The internet address is [www.state.nj.us/osp/](http://www.state.nj.us/osp/).

Here, you can find

everything related to the State Plan, including the Plan, Commission and staff listings, newsletters and technical memos, and the ability to e-mail comments.

Your participation and input would be greatly appreciated.

Please take this opportunity to join

with us in building a bright and prosperous future for New Jersey.

Thank You.



## Credits

*Juan Ayala – Visual Simulations  
The New Jersey State Photography Lab  
Andree’ Jannette – Editorial Services  
Anna Murphey, The New Jersey Herald  
Regional Plan Association / Dodson Associates*

## STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

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Principal, MCW Enterprises, LLC

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